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THE CRUISING ISSUE



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Remote Adventure

Discover unique ways to immerse in the wilds of Papua New Guinea. BY TERRY WARD

A snorkeling mask opens a window into wonder in the pristine waters of Papua New Guinea's Kimbe Bay, home to more than 60 percent of all of the coral species that exist in the Indo-Pacific. It's just one small peek at the exuberant biodiversity — both below the ocean's surface and above — that awaits in one of the most intrepid travel destinations on Earth.

A guided tour is the best way to experience Papua New Guinea due to both the often-complicated logistics of getting between destinations in these remote landscapes and the sheer cultural diversity to navigate. Papua New Guinea's more than 5,000 clans speak more than 850 languages, and traveling with expedition guides who can interpret all you're experiencing makes all the difference for truly rewarding travels.

"As the most culturally diverse nation on Earth, PNG has always been an anthropological mecca, as well boasting high biodiversity from snow-capped summits through dense tropical rainforests to the coral reefs and deep ocean trenches," said Rob McCallum, founder, EYOS Expeditions. The private superyacht expedition company offers fully customized itineraries aboard its 12-passenger *Hanse Explorer* that might include visiting a village in East New Britain to witness the awe-inspiring Baining fire dance or exploring Rabaul's World War II sites, volcanoes and local markets when you're not scuba diving or snorkeling colorful reefs.

Small-ship expedition company Coral Expeditions offers 12-night sailings with just 120 passengers connecting Cairns in Australia and Madang on Papua New Guinea's North Coast that include ports of call in places such as the Sepik River village of Bien and the Trobriand Islands and Fly Islands, where you might be privy to intimate meetings with locals to discuss things like sea level rise and food resilience in the remote regions where they live.

"Papua New Guinea is one of the last true frontiers of adventure where you can feel like a true explorer. It is a place of ancient culture and customs, striking landscapes and rich biodiversity that is such a close neighbor of Australia," said Jeff Gilles, chief commercial officer, Coral Expeditions.

And for an immersive land-based experience, consider a trekking expedition with World Expeditions. The company's



Kokoda Track adventure includes nine days of guided hiking along the route made notorious during World War II battles between Australian and Japanese forces. Along the way you'll stay in traditional villages and jungle camps for a fully immersive experience in these places so few outsiders have the privilege of getting to know.

Spectacular Seascapes: Marine reserve Raja Ampat (top), and red carnation coral (above)

PHOTOS: © VACLAV SEBEK / DREAMSTIME.COM, © CONCHASDIVER / DREAMSTIME.COM

ECOTOURISM

Power Supply

Cruise lines convert onboard waste into sustainable onboard energy. BY JENNIFER BILLOCK



On a medium-sized cruise ship carrying roughly 1,500–2,500 passengers, guests and crew together create more than 715,000 gallons of waste per week. That includes sewage, oily waste and solids. Multiply that by the 310 ships in the Cruise Lines International Association (plus all non-member cruise lines), plus the heat and exhaust produced, and that's a lot of waste. Luckily, it's not all pumping into the ocean. Cruise lines big and small have implemented waste management systems allowing them to turn onboard waste into onboard energy.

On Holland America Line, for example, engine waste heat goes through a power evaporation system that helps turn seawater into fresh water for use throughout the ships, producing heated water for the galley, laundry, pools and hot tubs. With Aurora Expeditions, food waste — including scraps, peels and organic material — goes through onboard biodigesters to break it down into safe-to-release gray water. This process helps reduce the ships' environmental impact by completely eliminating the need to store or incinerate food waste. Additionally, an onboard reverse osmosis water system desalinates seawater to provide guests with fresh water in water bottle refill stations.

Royal Caribbean Group, the line sailing *Icon of the Seas*, the world's largest cruise ship, aims for 100 percent landfill-free operations. Taking a cue from land-based waste-to-energy processes,

ROYAL CARIBBEAN GROUP, THE LINE SAILING *ICON OF THE SEAS*, THE WORLD'S LARGEST CRUISE SHIP, AIMS FOR 100 PERCENT LANDFILL-FREE OPERATIONS.

both *Icon* and Silversea Cruises' *Silver Nova* are now outfitted with microwave-assisted pyrolysis and micro auto gasification systems. These collect food and organic waste matter from the ships, turn it into a product called synthesis gas, or syngas, and then use that to power the hotel facilities on the vessels. Royal Caribbean was the first line to adopt this syngas technology, though others are expected to follow — like Norwegian Cruise Line, which began investigating the waste-to-energy technology in early 2025.

Smaller ships aim to turn waste into energy, as well, just not yet on the ships themselves. EYOS Expeditions, for example, works with superyachts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and instead directs the extra energy toward renewable power in developing countries. And Ecuadorian line Ecoventura compresses all its waste into small recyclable packages so nothing goes to a landfill.

Sustainable Sailing:
Royal Caribbean's *Icon of the Seas*
PHOTO: © ROYAL CARIBBEAN GROUP